

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR WESTERN WISCONSIN COUNTIES

JUNE 2003



La Crosse Metro Rate Down, State Unchanged, National Rate Increases Slightly

May Local Labor Scene

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the **La Crosse Metropolitan Area** declined 0.2 percentage points, resting at 3.9 percent in May. The 3.9 percent figure is 0.3 percentage points lower than the 4.2 percent recorded for May 2002. The statewide seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was unchanged from April at 5.4 percent, and up a tick from the 5.3 percent recorded statewide in May 2002.

La Crosse consistently has lower unemployment rates than the equivalent statewide rates and now that the slow but steady pull out of the economic doldrums has begun, the La Crosse economy is healing faster than the state as a whole. One of the principle reasons for the consistently lower La Crosse rates

and the faster recovery in the area is the diverse nature of the La Crosse Economy.

As in the case of many economic slowdowns, the manufacturing industry has been the hardest hit in terms of layoffs and closures.

Statewide the percentage of workers currently employed in the

manufacturing industry is 18.4 percent, in the La Crosse area the percentage is 13 percent, making the state as a whole more dependant on manufacturing than the La Crosse metro area. Slightly more than 20 percent of employment in the seven 'non-metropolitan' Western Wisconsin counties is found in the manufacturing industry. The unadjusted unemployment rate for the seven 'non-metropolitan' Western Wisconsin was 4.7 percent in May 2003. The unadjusted rate in May for the La Crosse MSA was 3.5 percent.

All eight Western Counties experienced declining unadjusted unemployment rates in May, joining the 71 of Wisconsin's 72 counties that had lower unemployment rates in May than they experienced in April. The City of La Crosse was one of the 23 of the state's 28 largest cities experiencing decreases in unadjusted unemployment rates over the month. The City of La Crosse rate declines 0.5 percentage points during the month.

National Notes

Manufacturing experienced a slight increase in the Midwest in June, according to figures released by the National Association of Purchasing Management—Chicago Bureau. The Association's index edged up to 52.5 in June from 52.2 in

May. A reading below 50 indicates a contracting regional manufacturing sector, while a reading above 50 signals expansion. The employment component of the index, soft in recent months, edged up to 43.8 from 43.6 in May.

Nationally, spending on construction projects dropped in

Labor Force Estimates (Seasonally Adjusted)			
	La Crosse * MSA	Wisconsin (000s)	United States (000s)
Current month: May 2003			
Civilian Labor Force	76,100	3,089.9	146,485
Employment	73,100	2,924.1	137,487
Unemployment	3,000	165.7	8,998
Unemployment rate	3.9%	5.4%	6.1%
Change from one month ago			
Civilian Labor Force	-500	-3.7	12
Employment	-300	-3.2	(200)
Unemployment	-100	-0.6	212
Unemployment rate	-0.2%	0.0%	0.1%
Change from one year ago			
Civilian Labor Force	1,300	66.7	1,574
Employment	1,500	60.4	1,000
Unemployment	-200	6.2	574
Unemployment rate	-0.3%	0.1%	0.3%
<i>Note: All estimates are preliminary and based on place of residence.</i>			
<i>* La Crosse MSA Statistics include Houston County Minnesota</i>			

May by the largest amount in a year, a sign that the economy is still struggling to get back on track. The value of construction projects under way in May was a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$869.8 billion, representing a 1.7 percent decline from April's level, the US Commerce Department reported. Although rainy weather in some parts of the country played a role in May's decline, it still marked the third month in a row that construction spending went down at the national level.

Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Area

May 2003	Buffalo	Crawford	Jackson	Juneau	Lacrosse	Monroe	Trempealeau	Vernon	Region	Non MSA*	Wisconsin
Civilian Labor Force**	7,620	10,330	12,080	10,920	64,450	21,630	16,090	14,340	157,450	93,010	3,077,070
Employed	7,330	9,790	11,640	10,040	62,150	20,720	15,360	13,730	150,780	88,630	2,921,220
Unemployed	290	540	440	880	2,290	900	730	610	6,670	4,380	155,850
Unemployment Rate	3.8%	5.2%	3.7%	8.0%	3.6%	4.2%	4.5%	4.2%	4.2%	4.7%	5.1%
Total Nonfarm (NFWS) ***	5,100	7,900	8,600	9,200	69,900	18,800	13,700	8,600	141,700	71,800	2,799,500
Total Private	4,100	6,700	5,600	7,000	60,000	14,300	11,300	6,400	115,400	55,400	2,374,700
Goods Producing	400	1,700	1,800	2,500	11,800	4,100	5,700	1,200	29,200	17,400	639,700
Service Producing	4,700	6,200	6,800	6,700	58,100	14,600	8,000	7,400	112,500	54,400	2,159,800
Constr., Mining & Nat.Rsrcs	160	260	1,020	270	2,700	570	290	240	5,500	2,800	123,600
Manufacturing	300	1,400	800	2,200	9,100	3,600	5,400	900	23,600	14,600	516,100
Trade	500	2,000	1,000	1,200	12,500	2,700	1,600	1,700	23,000	10,500	432,300
Transportation & Utilities	1,800	200	800	400	2,100	1,700	600	300	7,900	5,700	315,700
Financial Activities	160	200	230	240	3,600	610	350	380	5,800	2,200	156,200
Education and Health Services	600	1,100	600	1,200	12,500	1,700	1,100	1,500	20,200	7,700	362,300
Leisure & Hospitality	400	900	900	1,100	6,900	1,800	1,000	700	13,700	6,800	245,100
Info., Prof. & Bus. Svcs, Other Svcs	200	600	300	500	10,600	1,800	1,000	600	15,600	5,000	951,200
Total Government	930	1,170	3,010	2,180	9,810	4,480	2,420	2,220	26,200	16,400	424,800
Federal	170	70	60	220	450	2,190	130	120	3,420	2,970	28,700
State	20	210	450	570	2,610	240	30	40	4,180	1,570	103,500
Local	740	890	2,500	1,390	6,750	2,050	2,250	2,070	18,640	11,890	292,600
Change from one month ago	April 2003										
Civilian Labor Force**	-120	-60	80	-120	-400	590	-140	-200	-300	0	900
Employed	-10	90	290	70	0	720	150	50	1,300	1,400	23,200
Unemployed	-110	-150	-220	-190	-300	-120	-290	-240	-1,700	-1,300	-22,300
Unemployment rate(%)	-1.4	-1.4	-1.8	-1.6	-0.4	-0.7	-1.8	-1.6	-1.1	-1.4	-0.7
Total Nonfarm (NFWS) ***	70	120	270	110	200	760	210	90	1,800	1,600	32,100
Percent change NFWS from last month	1.4%	1.5%	3.2%	1.2%	0.3%	4.2%	1.6%	1.0%	1.3%	2.3%	1.2%
Total Private	70	100	300	200	400	700	190	90	2,000	1,600	35,500
Goods Producing	10	40	200	0	200	100	40	40	600	400	12,200
Service Producing	60	70	0	100	0	700	170	40	1,200	1,200	19,900
Constr., Mining & Nat.Rsrcs	10	20	220	10	200	50	40	30	600	400	10,900
Manufacturing	-10	30	0	0	0	0	10	20	0	0	1,300
Trade	10	0	0	0	100	50	30	20	200	100	6,600
Transportation & Utilities	30	0	-10	10	100	30	30	10	200	100	4,900
Financial Activities	0	0	0	0	100	10	10	10	100	0	1,500
Education and Health Services	0	10	0	0	-100	30	10	-10	0	0	-700
Leisure & Hospitality	30	40	30	100	200	150	90	20	700	500	12,300
Svcs	0	10	0	10	-200	420	-10	0	200	400	2,600
Total Government	0	10	-10	-50	-180	30	20	-10	-200	0	-3,400
Federal	0	0	0	-10	0	10	10	10	0	0	-100
State	0	20	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	-1,200
Local	-10	0	0	-40	-180	30	20	-20	-200	0	-2,100
Change from one year ago	May 2002										
Civilian Labor Force**	50	230	310	300	1,200	-470	1,240	410	3,300	2,100	65,900
Employed	50	190	350	370	1,400	-380	1,200	500	3,600	2,300	59,900
Unemployed	0	40	-40	-70	-100	-90	40	-100	-400	-200	6,000
Unemployment rate(%)	-0.1	0.2	-0.4	-0.9	-0.2	-0.3	-0.2	-0.8	-0.4	-0.4	0.1
Total Nonfarm (NFWS) ***	40	10	110	170	400	-690	890	180	1,100	700	-100
Percent change NFWS from last year	0.8%	0.1%	1.2%	1.9%	0.5%	-3.6%	7.0%	2.2%	0.8%	1.0%	0.0%
Total Private	50	-10	0	200	800	-400	600	100	1,500	600	1,200
Goods Producing	30	-270	0	-100	0	100	400	0	200	100	-18,100
Service Producing	10	280	100	300	300	-800	500	200	900	600	18,000
Constr., Mining & Nat.Rsrcs	10	0	20	0	-100	0	-30	-20	-100	0	-7,600
Manufacturing	20	-270	0	-100	100	90	410	50	300	200	-10,400
Trade	-20	30	0	0	600	160	110	90	1,000	400	2,600
Transportation & Utilities	20	20	-100	40	-100	90	20	20	100	200	800
Financial Activities	0	10	0	10	0	10	20	10	100	100	3,100
Education and Health Services	-10	50	0	100	400	80	30	0	600	200	6,100
Leisure & Hospitality	40	130	100	200	-200	170	170	10	600	900	-700
Svcs	-10	20	-100	0	100	-1,000	-80	-70	-1,100	-1,200	17,300
Total Government	-20	30	70	-20	-490	-300	250	90	-400	100	-1,300
Federal	0	-10	0	-30	-80	-160	10	0	-300	-200	-900
State	0	10	20	0	-30	-10	0	0	0	0	1,900
Local	-20	20	40	10	-380	-140	240	80	-100	300	-2,300

* Seven counties, excluding La Crosse County ** Includes participants residing in area. *** Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted.
Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers. NFWS data is benchmarked to 3/2002

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: <http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi/>

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